

Davis Plow Factory Sales Building  
and Houses  
South side Belfast Road near Joyce Lane  
Date: ca. 1850

Now an apartment house, the Davis Plow Factory is a two and one-half story house made of stone. Although the building is dated from ca. 1850-1870, the simplicity and functional details suggest a much earlier date. Originally owned and operated by Evan Davis, it is the last standing structure of agricultural industry which flourished in the 19th century.

The two frame two storied houses in Davisville appear to date from ca. 1870-1900.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

BA-811, 812, 813

MAGI #03081541

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Davis Plow Factory Sales Building and Houses

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

2153 Belfast Rd.

Southside Belfast Road near Joyce Lane

CITY, TOWN

Butler

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

☐ DISTRICT

☒ BUILDING(S)

☐ STRUCTURE

☐ SITE

☐ OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

☐ PUBLIC

☒ PRIVATE

☐ BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

☐ IN PROCESS

☐ BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

☒ OCCUPIED

☐ UNOCCUPIED

☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

**ACCESSIBLE**

☐ YES: RESTRICTED

☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED

☐ NO

**PRESENT USE**

☐ AGRICULTURE

☐ COMMERCIAL

☐ EDUCATIONAL

☐ ENTERTAINMENT

☐ GOVERNMENT

☐ INDUSTRIAL

☐ MILITARY

☐ MUSEUM

☐ PARK

☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE

☐ RELIGIOUS

☐ SCIENTIFIC

☐ TRANSPORTATION

☐ OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

William E. Davis

Telephone #: 472-2368

STREET & NUMBER

Belfast Road

CITY, TOWN

Sparks

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21152

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #: 1095

Folio #: 541

STREET & NUMBER

Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The remaining structure of the Davis Plow Factory is a two and one-half storey stone structure closely oriented to the road, its roadside or west facade two full storeys in height, its east facade but one due to the rising grade. Now an apartment house, it functioned as a sales building with a dwelling above in the period of the Plow Factory. It appears to date from ca. 1850-1870, although its traditional, utterly functional detailing suggests a much earlier date.

The first storey of the west or roadside facade is four bays in length, an entrance being in the second bay from the north; the second storey is expressed as three bays, windows being approximately over the masonry between openings below. The east facade is expressed as five bays, entrances being in the northerly bay and in the second bay from the south. In depth, the structure is expressed as two bays, a door being in the first storey near the northwest corner, and in the second near the southeast corner, each sheltered by a small porch. Two dormers are in each roof slope and two six-light sash are in each gable end. Windows are 9/9 in plain, narrow frames. Masonry above windows is supported by stone jack arches.

The gabled roof rises above a traditional wooden cornice which includes an early-19th century bedmoulding. Barge boards are

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
X 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES	Unknown	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Unknown
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**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

The Davis Plow Factory and its supportive buildings occupied a site on the south side of Belfast Road directly opposite the William E. Davis farm. Both were owned and operated by Evan Davis, grandfather of the present owner. Although the actual foundry and manufactory have disappeared, there are vestiges of the former bustling village of Davisville such as the former sales building, now an apartment house, two tenant houses, probably built for workmen's families, and a very old tenant house, once the local school (q.v.).

The 1850 Sidney map of Baltimore County shows the plow factory, as does the 1850 Census of Products of Industry. Besides these, the earliest written reference to the business was an account in the American Farmer of December, 1855, that Evan Davis had won a plowing match with his Woodcock Plow. In addition to plows, Davis manufactured threshers, cultivators, and other agricultural equipment. His ledgers also show iron work done for the local mills.

At Davis' death in 1887, the factory was inherited by his son, Thomas W. Davis, and the farm across the road by another son, Joshua B. Davis. The former carried on the business until about 1895, but then closed it down and scrapped the remaining products of the once-thriving factory.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Sidney, J.C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland.  
(Baltimore, 1850).

Baltimore County Tax Assessments: 1876, 1896.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 11.55 acres

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION****LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Catharine F. Black and James T. Wollon, Jr. AIA

ORGANIZATION

For Valleys Historical District Project

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1114 Bellemore Road

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore

DATE

September 1976

TELEPHONE

323-3798

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

Davis Plow Factory Sales Building  
Valleys Historic District

## Continuation Sheet #1

Question #7 Continued

against masonry and there is no rake overhang. A single-flue brick chimney rises flush above the north gable and another rises internally through the ridge at about the northerly third-point.

The interior of this structure has been refinished extensively but simply as an apartment house. Original ledge doors of vertical beaded boards remain in use, and the original random-width floors are exposed in some spaces.

## Davisville Houses

Two frame houses, each two storeys in height stand in Davisville, in addition to the Davis Plow Factory Sales Building and the William E. Davis House.

The southerly of the two houses, although close to the road, faces south, not west as it would if it faced the road. It is two bays in length and exterior walls are covered with German siding. The gabled roof rises above a simple wooden cornice with bold eave returns and a single-flue chimney rises from the center of the house. Windows are 6/6 with narrow beaded frames, flanked with louvred blinds. The principal entrance is in the westerly bay of the south front and a hipped-roof porch, one storey in height, extends across the south front.

The interior of this house was not examined. It appears to date from ca. 1870-1900.

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

Davis Plow Factory Sales Building  
Valleys Historic District

## Continuation Sheet #2

Question #7 Continued

The northerly of the two Davisville houses faces west toward the road. It is three bays in length, its principal entrance centered. A two storey shed-roofed wing extends from its south end and a one-storey hipped-roof porch extends across the entire west front, including that front of the south wing. A single-flue chimney rises externally at the south end of the main house. Exterior walls are covered with aluminum siding; otherwise, most exterior details of the two houses are the same.

The interior of this house was not examined; it too appears to date from ca. 1870-1900.

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Davis Plow Factory Sales Building  
Valleys Historic District

Continuation Sheet #3

Question #9 Continued

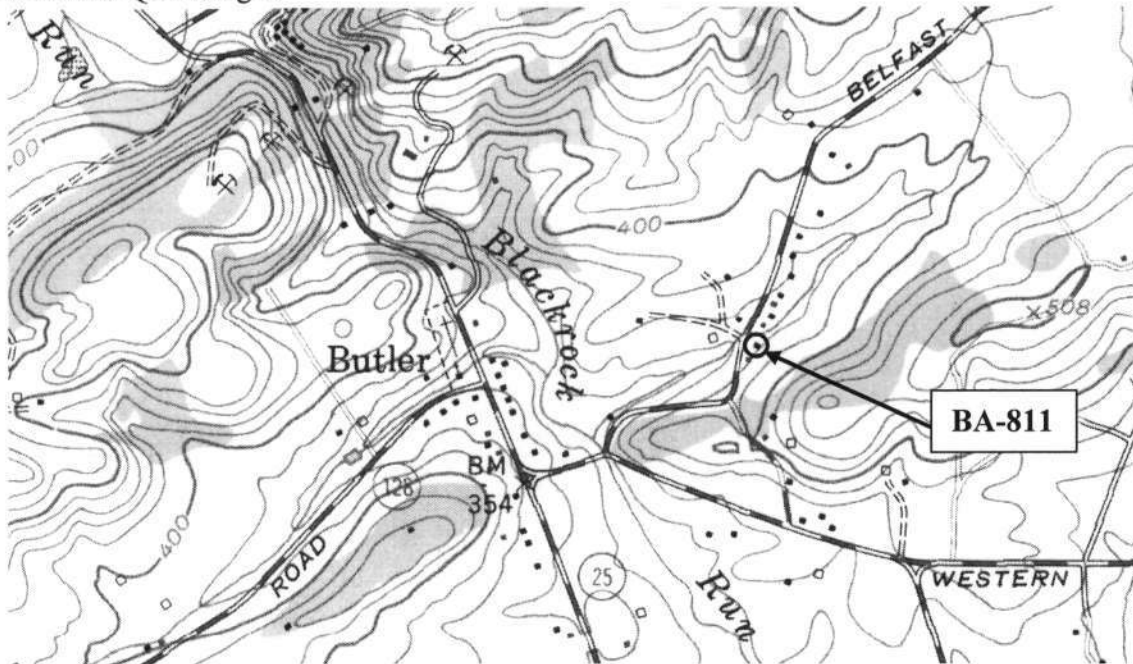
McGrain, John W. "Heavy Industry at Davisville". Unpublished  
manuscript. Copyright, 1975.

Interview with William E. Davis.

Products of Industry Census: 1850, 1860.

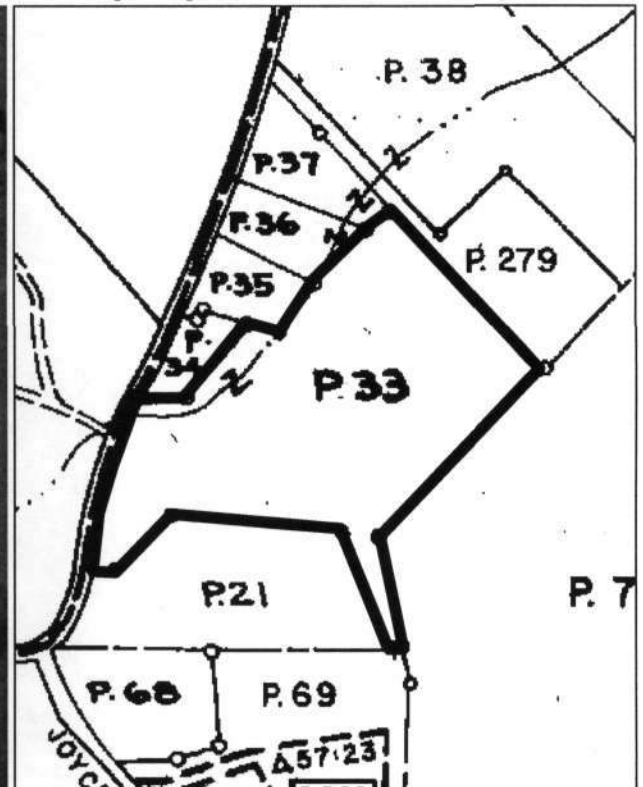


BA-811  
Davis Plow Factory, Sales Building  
2153 Belfast Road, Butler  
Hereford Quadrangle



Mapquest aerial photo, c. 2007

Tax Map 33, p. 33



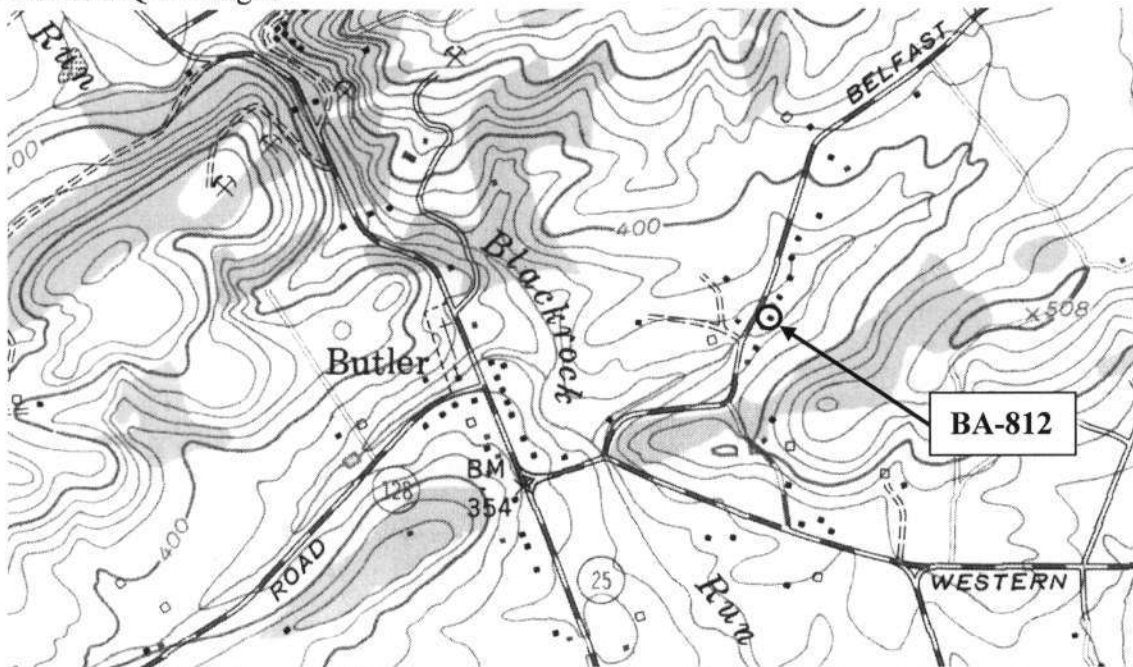
BA-811  
Davis Plow Factory, Sales Building  
2153 Belfast Road, Butler  
Jennifer K. Cosham, 12 July 2007  
Northwest elevation



Outbuilding, northwest elevation

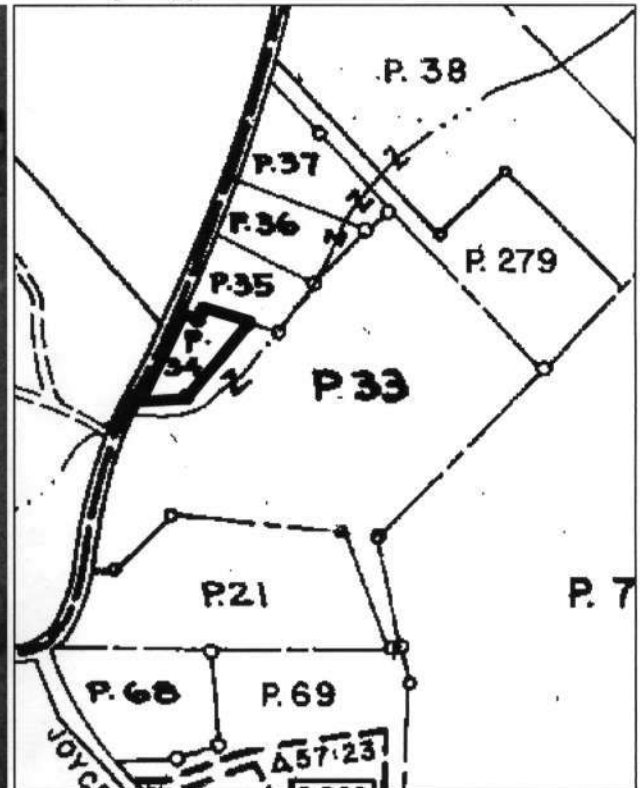


BA-812  
Davis Plow Factory Tenant House No. 1  
2141 Belfast Road, Butler  
Hereford Quadrangle



Mapquest aerial photo, c. 2007

Tax Map 33, p. 34



BA-812

Davis Plow Factory Tenant House No. 1

2141 Belfast Road, Butler

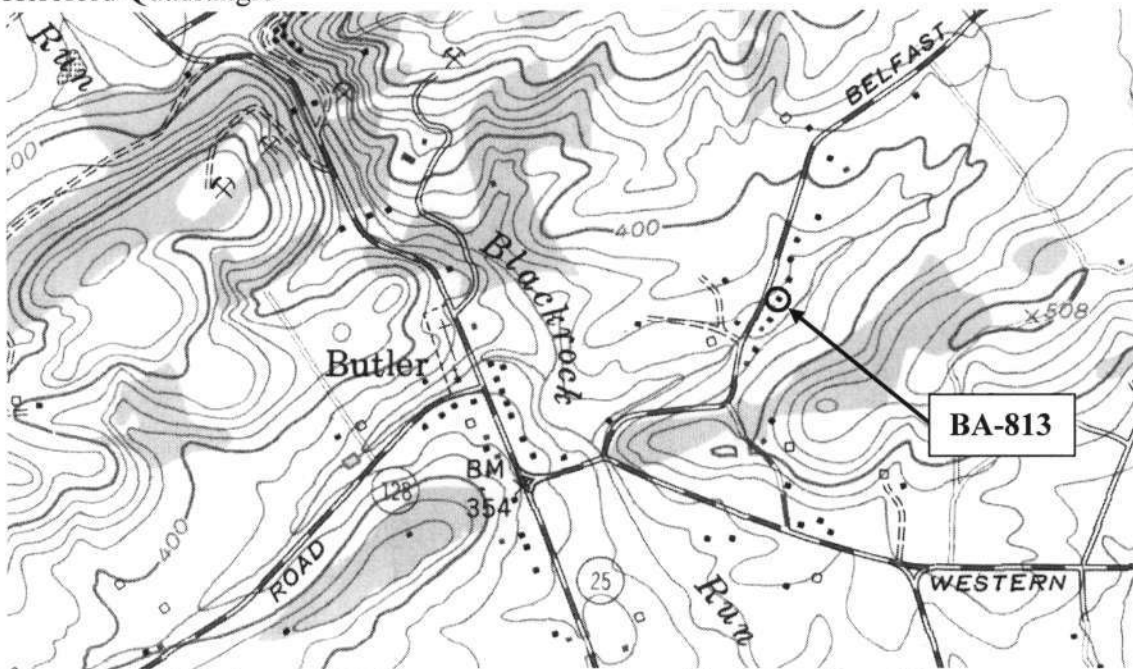
Jennifer K. Cosham, 12 July 2007

South elevation



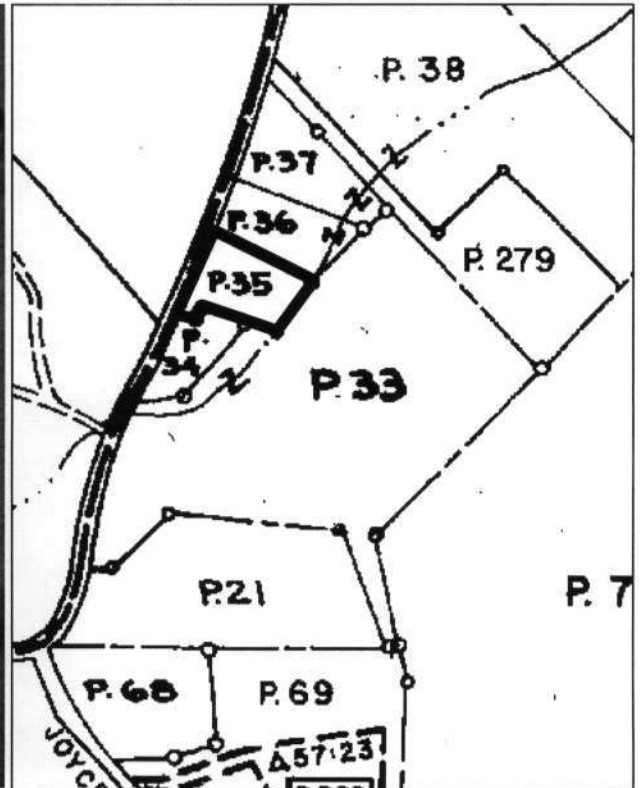


BA-813  
 Davis Plow Factory Tenant House No. 2  
 2135 Belfast Road, Butler  
 Hereford Quadrangle



Mapquest aerial photo, c. 2007

Tax Map 33, p. 35



BA-813

Davis Plow Factory Tenant House No. 2

2135 Belfast Road, Butler

Jennifer K. Cosham, 12 July 2007

Southwest elevation



Northwest elevation

